Manitoba Firearm Accidents Report

Hunting and Non-Hunting 1988

Hunter and Firearm Safety Program

Manitoba
Natural Resources

89-04767/

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Municipal Police Forces requiring additional accident report forms please contact us at 1495 St. James St., or phone 945-6644.

SUMMARY

During the 1988 calendar year there were 26 firearm related accidents, thirteen of which were self-inflicted. There were four fatal accidents. Two involved shooters that were 3 and 6 years of age playing with firearms at home. A third fatality involved a party of 4 moose hunters all wearing dark clothing and the fourth fatality was self-inflicted while the victim was crossing a fence.

Twelve of the twenty-six accidents were not directly related to hunting. However, in 14 accidents the shooter was actively pursuing a bird or animal. Six involved licenced hunters during an open season of which three were non-resident hunters. The remaining eight shooters were pursuing game where licences weren't required.

Nineteen of the twenty-six reported accidents occurred at a distance of less than ten yards. Only two of the twenty-six accidents involved graduates of a Hunter Safety Program.

The Manitoba Hunter Safety Course was completed by 2,953 students in 1988. Some 106,518 students have now graduated from the program since it began in 1964. Of this total, only 123 have later become involved in accidents.

CAUSE OF ACCIDENTS

	1987	1988
Victim out of sight of shooter.	3	1
Victim moved into line of fire.	1	0
Victim covered by shooter swinging on game.	1	1
Victim mistaken for game.	2	2
Shooter stumbled and fell.	3	3
Using firearm as club.	0	0
Trigger caught on bush or other object.	5	3
Loaded firearm in vehicle.	2	3
Firearm fell from insecure rest.	0	1
"Horseplay" and/or "didn't know it was loaded".	2	3
Crossing fence or other obstacle with loaded firearm.	0	1
Loading.	0	0
Unloading.	0	0
Defective firearm	1	2
Cleaning firearm	0	0
Loaded firearm in the home.	4	4
Accidental discharge.	0	0
Ricochet.	1	2
Unknown.	0	0
	25	26

Average firearm accidents per year in 5 year increments since Hunter Safety Program commenced.

1964-1968	44.2
1969-1973	56.0
1974-1978	53.6
1979-1983	42.8
1984-1988	26.4

SYNOPSIS OF 1988 FIREARM ACCIDENTS

	1987	1988
Total Number of Accidents	**25**	**26**
Fatal	3	4
Non-fatal	22	22
Hunting Legally During Regular Season	**7**	**6**
Fatal	1	0
Non-fatal	6	6
Treaty Indian Hunting	**0**	**5**
Fatal	0	1
Non-fatal	0	4
Hunting Small Animals, Birds, or Illegally Hunting	**9**	**3**
Fatal	1	1
Non-fatal	8	2
Non-hunting Accidents	**9**	**12**
Fatal in the home	1	1
Fatal in a vehicle	0	0
Fatal outside home	0	1
Non-fatal in the home	4	3
Non-fatal in a vehicle	1	3
Non-fatal outside the home	3	4
Shooter Unknown	**0**	**0**
Fatal	0	0
Non-fatal	0	0
Accidents Involving Shooter 18 years and under	**15**	**11**
All Types of Hunting	**8**	**5**
Fatal	0	0
Non-fatal	8	5
Non-hunting	**7**	**6**
Fatal	1	2
Non-fatal	6	4

TYPE OF FIREARM INVOLVED

	1987	1988
.22 calibre Rim Fire Rifle	**13**	**9**
Fatal	1	1
Non-fatal	12	8
Centre Fire Hi Power Rifle	**4**	**2**
Fatal	1	1
Non-fatal	3	1
Shotgun	**6**	**11**
Fatal	1	1
Non-fatal	5	10
Hand Gun	**0**	**1**
Fatal	0	0
Non-fatal	0	1
Pellet Gun	**2**	**3**
Fatal	0	1
Non-fatal	2	2
Unknown	**0**	**0**
Fatal	0	0
Non-fatal	0	0

DISTANCE OF VICTIM FROM SHOOTER

	1987	1988
0 to 10 yards	18	19
10 to 50 yards	2	5
50 to 100 yards	3	1
over 100 yards	2	1
Distance Unknown	0	0

OCCURRENCES

Time of Day	1987	1988
Midnight - 3:00 a.m.	0	0
3:00 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.	1	0
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	3	3 *
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon	4	6 **
12:00 noon - 3:00 p.m.	5 **	6
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	8 *	4
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	2	4 *
9:00 p.m. - 12:00 midnight	2	1
Unknown	0	2
By Day		
Sunday	4	3 *
Monday	6	6
Tuesday	3 *	3 *
Wednesday	0	0
Thursday	3	7 *
Friday	4 *	4 *
Saturday	5 *	3
By Month		
January	0	1
February	0	1
March	2	1 *
April	4	4 *
May	2 *	1
June	2	2
July	1	0
August	0	2 *
September	2	4
October	6 *	6
November	5 *	3 *
December	1	1

* Indicates one fatal

SUMMARY OF 1988 ACCIDENTS

The following summary of accidents related to the use of firearms serves as a useful lesson for everyone who enjoy shooting sports. Hunter Safety Instructors and their students should make a special effort to study each incident and analyze how the accident occurred. In most cases, one or more of the 10 commandments of Hunter Safety were violated. Don't let you or your friends be the cause of an accident recorded in next year's report.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS OF HUNTER SAFETY

1. **WATCH THAT MUZZLE!** Carry your gun safely; keep safety on until ready to shoot.
2. **TREAT EVERY GUN WITH THE RESPECT DUE A LOADED GUN.**
3. **UNLOAD GUNS WHEN NOT IN USE,** take down or have actions open; guns should be carried in cases to shooting area.
4. **BE SURE BARREL IS CLEAR OF OBSTRUCTIONS,** and that you have ammunition only of the proper size for the gun you carry.
5. **BE SURE OF TARGET BEFORE YOU PULL TRIGGER;** know identifying features of game you hunt.
6. **NEVER POINT A GUN AT ANYTHING YOU DO NOT WANT TO SHOOT;** avoid all horseplay.
7. **NEVER CLIMB A TREE OR FENCE OR JUMP A DITCH WITH A LOADED GUN;** never pull a gun toward you by the muzzle.
8. **NEVER SHOOT A BULLET AT A FLAT, HARD SURFACE OR WATER;** at target practice be sure your backstop is adequate.
9. **STORE GUNS AND AMMUNITION SEPARATELY,** beyond reach of children.
10. **AVOID ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** before or during shooting.

DATE & TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL OR NON FATAL	SELF INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	HUNTER SAFETY GRADUATE	CIRCUMSTANCES
Friday January 1 12:15 pm	31	Non Fatal	Yes	Handgun	0-10 yds	Non-Hunting	No	The victim dropped a loaded home made derringer and when it hit the floor it discharged. The bullet struck him in the left leg.
Saturday February 27 6:15 pm	30	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. Rifle	0-10 yds	Non-Hunting	Yes	The victim was placing a loaded firearm into a carrying case while he was sitting in a vehicle. The firearm discharged and the bullet penetrated his right knee.
Sunday March 27 8:00 pm	3	Fatal	No	22 cal. Rifle	0-10 yds	Non-Hunting	No	Two children ages three and five were playing with a loaded rifle in the living room of their home. While the three year old was handling the firearm it discharged. The bullet struck the victim in the head.
Friday April 1 7:00 am	Unknown	Fatal	No	303 cal. Rifle	50-100 yds	Moose	No	Four hunters were tracking moose in a wooded area. The shooter saw movement and fired at what he thought was a moose. The victim was struck in the head by the bullet. All four hunters were wearing dark clothing.

DATE & TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL OR NON FATAL	SELF INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	HUNTER SAFETY GRADUATE	CIRCUMSTANCES
Monday April 4 7:15 pm	15	Non Fatal	No	12 Gauge Shotgun	10-50 yds	Non-Hunting	No	Two victims were struck by pellets in the back while riding on a three wheel trike. The shooter was following behind them.
Sunday April 17 6:00 pm	18	Non Fatal	Yes	Shotgun	0-10 yds	Non-Hunting	No	The victim was moving a shotgun which he didn't know was loaded. His finger struck the trigger and the shotgun discharged. He was hit by pellets in the right foot.
Tuesday April 26 9:30 pm	14	Non Fatal	No	22 cal. Rifle	100 yds or more	Muskrat	No	Two youths were opposite each other at a slough. The shooter shot at a muskrat and the bullet ricochetted striking the victim in the right thigh.
Monday May 23 4:40 pm	15	Non Fatal	No	12 gauge Shotgun	0-10 yds	Rabbits	No	The shooter was using a loaded shotgun as a walking aid while descending a steep bank. The shotgun slipped away from his grip, slid down the bank and discharged back up at the shooter and his partner. Both victims received pellet wounds to their legs and body.

DATE & TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL OR NON FATAL	SELF INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	HUNTER SAFETY GRADUATE	CIRCUMSTANCES
Thursday June 9 Unknown	29	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. Rifle	0-10 yds	Non-Hunting	Yes	The shooter was cleaning his rifle in his residence. He dropped the rifle on the floor causing it to discharge. The bullet left a one inch graze mark on his forehead. He had thought the rifle was unloaded.
Thursday June 16 2:30 pm	18	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. Rifle	0-10 yds	Gophers	No	The shooter was hunting gophers in his yard. While sneaking up on a gopher he tripped over a garden hose and the rifle discharged. He was struck by the bullet in the left leg.
Wednesday April 24 12:00 pm	13	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. Rifle	0-10 yds	Non-Hunting	No	The shooter had her rifle pointed to the ground. While bringing it up to shoot at a target she pulled the trigger. The bullet struck her right foot.
Tuesday August 30 11:30 am	6	Fatal	No	Pellet Gun	0-10 yds	Non-Hunting	No	A six year old boy was playing with a loaded gun in the back yard of his residence. The gun discharged and the pellet struck a nine year old in the forehead above the left eye. He had been sitting on the door step.

DATE & TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL OR NON FATAL	SELF INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	HUNTER SAFETY GRADUATE	CIRCUMSTANCES
Monday Sept. 5 9:30 am	18	Non Fatal	Yes	410 cal Shotgun	0-10 yds	Ducks	No	The shooter was in a boat and while reaching for a sandwich the firearm she was holding discharged. She received severe injuries to various bones in her left wrist.
Tuesday Sept. 6 7:00 pm	42	Non Fatal	No	12 gauge Shotgun	10-50 yds	Grouse	No	Shooter fired at a grouse and two pellets struck his son in the leg. The victim was out of sight of the shooter.
Saturday Sept. 24 1:00 pm	30	Non Fatal	No	12 gauge Shotgun	10-50 yds	Grouse	No	Victim was standing in a willow bluff. The shooter mistook the victims pant colouring as that of a grey breast of a grouse and shot. Victim received pellet wounds to the back of his right leg.
Saturday Sept. 24 3:00 pm.	Unknown	Non Fatal	No	12 gauge Shotgun	10-50 yds	Grouse	No	A party of four were grouse hunting. A grouse was flushed and everyone shot. The victim was struck on the ear by a pellet which had ricochetted.

DATE & TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL OR NON FATAL	SELF INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	HUNTER SAFETY GRADUATE	CIRCUMSTANCES
Sunday October 2 3:30 pm	16	Non Fatal	No	Pellet Gun	0-10 yds	Non-Hunting	No	The victim was riding his bicycle past the shooter who was target practicing in his yard. The shooter pointed the pellet gun at the victim and it discharged. He was struck by the pellet in the right thigh.
Monday October 3 8:00 pm	69	Non Fatal	No	Shotgun	0-10 yds	Waterfowl	No	Victim and shooter were in an aluminum twelve foot duck boat. The bottom of the boat was icy and wet. When the shooter stood up to shoot at a goose he slipped and fell. The gun discharged and hit the victim in the right forearm.
Thursday October 13 Unknown	70	Non Fatal	No	Shotgun	10-50 yds	Grouse	No	Victim and shooter were hunting grouse in a brush covered area. Victim came around a corner just as the shooter fired at a bird. The victim was struck by pellets in the face and forehead.
Thursday October 13 1:50 pm	25	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. Rifle	0-10 yds	Sparrows	No	The victim was shooting sparrows. He fired the rifle twice and the third time he fired it from the hip and the rifle exploded. He received lacerations to his left hand and chest.

DATE & TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL OR NON FATAL	SELF INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	HUNTER SAFETY GRADUATE	CIRCUMSTANCES
Monday October 24 9:30 am	6	Non Fatal	No	22 cal. Rifle	0-10 yds	Non-Hunting	No	Accident occurred when a six year old found live ammunition, loaded the rifle and fired it at his 3 year old sister. The bullet struck her in the back.
Friday October 28 12:00 pm	37	Non Fatal	Yes	300 cal. Rifle	0-10 yds	Trapping	No	While on shore the shooter pulled a rifle from inside his boat and the rifle discharged. He was struck in the left thigh by the bullet.
Monday Nov. 7 11:30 am	41	Non Fatal	Yes	12 gauge Shotgun	0-10 yds	Grouse	No	The shooter fired his shotgun and it blew up. He received severe injuries to his left hand.
Thursday Nov. 17 11:00 am	65	Fatal	Yes	Shotgun	0-10 yds	Magpies	No	The victim who had recently broken his ankle was using crutches to walk. He was pursuing magpies and was using only one crutch. While crossing a fence his leg became entangled by barbed wire. It appears the muzzle was against the victims chest when it discharged.
Thursday Nov. 24 7:30 am	19	Non Fatal	Yes	Pellet Gun	0-10 yds	Non-Hunting	No	The victim was placing his pellet gun against a tree when it discharged. The pellet lodged under the skin between his eyes.

DATE & TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL OR NON FATAL	SELF INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	HUNTER SAFETY GRADUATE	CIRCUMSTANCES
Friday December 2 2:55 pm	24	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. Rifle	0-10 yds	Non-Hunting	No	The victim was bringing his firearm into his home when it discharged. He was struck by the bullet in the right hand.